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Berwick, Edward

The coming commonwealth of man

[San Francisco]

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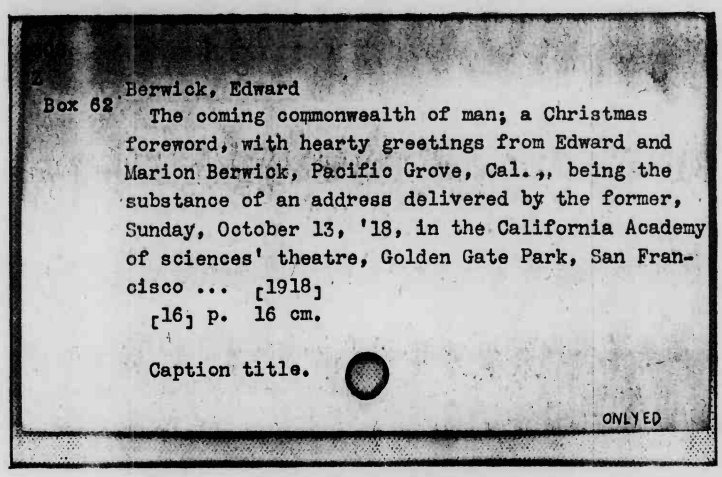
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The Coming Commonwealth of Man

A Christmas foreword, with hearty greetings from Edward and Marion Berwick, Pacific Grove, Cal., being the substance of an address delivered by the former, Sunday, October 13, '18, in the California Academy of Sciences' Theatre, Golden Gate Park, San Francisco.

Friends all:

Since I undertook, ten weeks ago, to talk to you today on the coming Commonwealth of Man, President Woodrow Wilson and Premier David Lloyd George have written my lecture for me.

Perhaps I should apologise to an Academy of Sciences' audience for choosing a subject that some might deem non-scientific. We, unfortunately, often think of Science as being something remote, and the sole perquisite of a favored few who handle microscopes or telescopes. We forget that the scope of science is not necessarily micro or tele—it's omniscope. Science is all-embracing; is simply "ordered knowledge"; with the proviso that it is real knowledge based on truth and not on arrogant assertion; otherwise it becomes pseudo-science or sheerest ignorance.

What, then, has science to do with the Coming Commonwealth of Man? Well, of all the sciences that today clamor for further research, further investigation, there is none clamoring as loudly as the Science of Statesmanship. Are we over-supplied with any "ordered knowledge" founded in the Eternal Verities on this subject?

Of what has alleged statesmanship chiefly

consisted? Do you recall how Sir Henry Wotton, one of the ambassadors of Good Queen Bess, defined his function, as "one sent to lie abroad for the good of his country"? What caused the present bloody welter of world war but the secret diplomacy of so-called statesmen?

If hypocrisy, chicane, and lies could be the basis of Science then might this discredited statesmanship of the past be rightly called scientific.

Fortunately in our present bitter need a real Statesman scientist has a grasp on the world governmental helm. One whose life has been given to research in History, Politics, and Statesmanship of an entirely different brand. So unwelcome was his advent to politicians of the old school that for months there was heaped on his head contempt, contumely, and ridicule. He was derided and caricatured, forsooth, as a "schoolmaster"; as tho', in a land whose hope for the future is based on universal education, to be a "schoolmaster" were to be unspeakably unworthy of the exalted position of President of our great republic. Moreover, by a curious coincidence, the son of another schoolmaster is the Premier of Great Britain. Both these men are statesmen scientists of that new American type whose great forerunner was Benjamin Franklin. His constant use of the simple truth confounded the diplomatist deceivers of the Machiavellian stripe. President Monroe, who in 1818 freed our Northern border from militarism by the Rush-Bagot arrangement, was another splendid specimen. With the advent of these men of this new American school of real democracy there has come a near approach to the realization of the dreams and visions of past poets, prophets, and patriots. You all remember Isaiah's hope of a time when "swords should be turned into plowshares." You have all heard of Greek, Norse, Celtic, and Arab legends of the earthly paradise in the Western Ocean, where mortal man should enjoy the bliss of perpetual peace. Hence Bacon's "New Atlantis," where Science had furnished the key to universal happiness; also Sir Thomas More's "Utopia" (literally "where the place"?) similarly blest. Multitudinous are similar visions of Burns, Bulwer, Bellamy, Tennyson, Lowell down to H. G. Wells.

You will recall Burns' "Honest Poverty," with its concluding stanza:

"Then let us pray that come it may,
As come it will for a' that,
That sense and worth o'er all the earth
Shall bear the gree and a' that,
For a' that and a' that,
It's coming yet for a' that
That man to man the world o'er
Shall brothers be and a' that!"

Yet more definite is the wonderful forecast of Tennyson

Men, my brothers, men the workers, ever reaping something new;
That which they have done but earnest of the things that they shall do.

For I dipt into the future, far as human eye could see,
Saw the Vision of the world and all the wonder that would be;

Saw the heavens fill with commerce, argosies of magic sails,
Pilots of the purple twilight dropping down with costly bales;

Heard the heavens fill with shouting and there rain'd a ghastly dew
From the nations' airy navies grappling in the central blue;

Far along the world-wide whisper of the south-wind rushing warm
With the standards of the peoples plunging thro' the thunder storm;

Till the war drums throbb'd no longer, and the battle flags were furl'd
In the Parliament of man, the Federation of the world.

Following Tennyson in our own land James Russell Lowell foresees how

"Down the happy Future runs a flood
Of prophesying light.

It shows an earth no longer bathed in blood,
Blossom and fruit where now we see the bud
Of Brotherhood and Right!"

Later comes Percy Mackaye with nearer visualization of "World Federation":

"A dream? Yes! The dream that once was a planet's derision
Now blazons a planet's prayer!
America! Dreamer of dreams! Be Destiny's leader!
Militant first for mankind, for so your own soul,
Blended of all, for all shall be interceder
And guide to the world's goal!"

Take one last line from Walt Whitman:—

"Is it a dream?
Nay! But the lack of it a dream!
And, failing it, life's love and wealth a dream;
And all the world a dream!"

Victor Hugo's longing for a "United States of Europe" will doubtless be recalled by some present.

I dwell thus long on these utterances,—these visions, these dreams, if you will,—not only because "where there is no vision the people perish," but, because "the dreams that nations dream come true and shape the earth anew."

Well! How near have we attained to this "shaping anew"?

Let me read to you this time no vision, but, an official document, sent to me prior to our last 4th of July, by the National Committee on Public Information, which consists of four members, the Secretaries of State, War, and the Navy, with George Creel, as chairman.

On the first page is the petition to the President of the United States from twenty-nine different nations, which gave me my title for this lecture, "The Coming World Commonwealth." After stating that "the world democracy, of which this nation was a pioneer," is now "formidably assailed by the powers of reaction and autocracy," they continue "We regard ourselves now not only as members of an American commonwealth, one and indivisible, but of a **world commonwealth**, equally indivisible. United for the principles of that democratic **world state.**" . . . they "respectfully request" that **we** all unite "in commemorating this, the anniversary not only of national freedom but of **universal freedom.**"

On the last page President Wilson, with "hearty commendation," asks all his fellow countrymen to unite in making Independence Day of 1918 "the most significant in our national history," and to "celebrate the birth of a new and greater spirit of democracy, by whose influence, we hope and believe, what the signers of the Declaration of Independence dreamed of for themselves and their fellow-countrymen **shall be fulfilled for all mankind.**"

Pacific Grove thereupon sent out 40 invitations to neighboring cities and various organizations and most heartily celebrated this new World Independence Day with speakers in many tongues, and a reading of President Wilson's call for this new birth of the old world.

Having heard this call of America now hear the voice of England, from that schoolmaster's son, David Lloyd George, Premier of Great Britain.

"We are learning many things in this war. We are learning to know each other. We shall never meet as foreigners again; we talk to each other now exactly as tho' we were old friends and of the same race. Foreigners no more, there is a common cause, a common table, a common larder, a common coal-cellar. . . . In shipping we are making that common as far as we can. It is a common cause, a common struggle, and a common sacrifice; and from the common cause and common conflict and the common struggle, we shall have a common triumph; we shall have a **common brotherhood**, which will be the surest guarantee for peace on earth and good will among men of all races, creeds, and nationalities to the end of all time."

Do you believe now that a world-commonwealth is possible? Commonwealth? Has not the day of that common-wealth already arrived. Why, what is wealth? At breakfast this very morning you and I shared our bread, our bacon, our sugar with Frenchmen, Italians, Britishers and others six thousand miles away. We are today sharing that even more obvious symbol of wealth, our purse, with many na-

tions. Last and most precious of our possessions we are sharing our heart's blood, the blood of our splendid American youth and manhood, placing our all at the disposal of one single directing power, that we may finally—once and for all—realise the long-prophecied time "when nation shall not lift up sword against nation nor learn war any more."

We don't use just that phraseology, we say "to make an end of Militarism."

What is Militarism? It is the Supremacy of Brute Force.

But of late there has been something superadded to Brute Force which makes more imperative the ending of this curse of Militarism. Before Eden brute force meant simply the sharpest teeth and toughest toe nails and tendons. Next it meant the added force of a rude club painfully gnawed from an oak sapling. Then stone hammers and flint axes and arrows settled human scraps. Following these the bronze knife brought victory to its wielder, until he succumbed to the steel sword and spear. Invention brought "villainous saltpetre," and the man behind the gun became conqueror. Now we have arrived at the age of poisonous gases, high explosives, and airy navies, a combination competent to asphyxiate in a few minutes every living thing in a sleeping city. Only yesterday tidings came of a new incendiary bomb, to the flames from which water only added fury. Horrors yet more horrible may follow!

Fortunately along with this development there has been gradually evolved a new force, to which every nation engaged in this world struggle appeals. It is the force of Public Opinion. White, blue, yellow, red books have been poured out in floods from national printing presses, all appealing to Public Opinion to justify each country's share in the war.

And, in addition to the war of blood, the war has become a war of manifestos; manifestos even showered from the heavens back of the enemy's lines with intent to lower the morale of the battling armies.

Concurrent with this evolution of various forces History presents us with another phenomenon—the uniting of peoples.

Starting from the far distant date when every man's hand was against his fellow and the cave men bit and fought like dogs over a bone, we come soon to a record of the Father of the Faithful, Abraham, taking a hand in a battle where, in the small valley of Chedorlaomer, four kings fought against five. Those of you who have travelled up the Rhine will well remember the ruined castles crowning every height, where in former days some buccaneering bishop, or baron, or count kept his bandit army to defend himself, if he could, and harry his neighbor, or rob a passing merchant train, if he might. After a while these fighting freebooters found it profitable to unite under some prominent warrior, and conditions such as those of the English Heptarchy obtained, when 7 kings ruled in England. Of course there were various other kinglets in Wales, Scotland and Ireland. Now, if you had lived in that time of the Heptarchy, and had told a Wessex man that in a century or two there would be only one king ruling all those 7 kingdoms, he'd have said, "My friend, you're perfectly utopian," if he ever used so high sounding a word. And if, when only one monarch governed the kingdom you had ventured to predict a time when the British sovereign's sway would extend over Australia, South Africa, Canada, India, and the islands of the seven seas, your hearers would have been less polite in their phraseology, and would have dubbed you a "born fool."

But not only in the English-speaking world has this process of unification been taking place; I have witnessed in my short span the uniting of various kingdoms, dukedoms, and one theocracy, into the kingdom of Italy; Canada, from being a land of many separate provinces, became unified into one Dominion; Australia federated its many colonies, and United Australia arose; South Africa similarly coalesced; as did Germany in 1870.

Let me also remind you of some of our own early history. As you all know 1776 rang in our day of independence. Do you all realise just how very independent each of the 13 states considered itself? Do you realise that it took 13 years to make them understand the

necessity of surrendering some share of individual independence in order to become the United States of America.

Probably each of these achievements appeared as impossible in its day as now does the forming the United States of the World—this new World-Commonwealth—the crying need of our day.

To some of you this may still sound something wildly theoretical, utopian, crazy—call it what you will.

But, in sober, every day fact, is it not true that we are this very hour confronted not by a theory, but by a condition, the condition so ably voiced by the British Prime Minister whose words I have already quoted.

Already sharing everything obviously the world-commonwealth is at at our very doors.

I should like to emphasize that commonwealth is a compound word, and means just what the two words mean when separated, but in the same sequence,—common wealth.

What in the past hindered the development of such common wealth as Mr. Lloyd George avers we have now attained?

What have been the causes of dissension, strife, and bloodshed between the nations?

Have they not been in the main threefold—economic, racial, religious?

Have our theories of economics been founded on economic justice or on sheer selfishness? Have we not always accepted as an axiom that the "balance of trade," as it is called, must be in our favor?

Here is a case of two nations, A and B, each taught, as a cardinal principle, that it must sell more goods, raw or manufactured, to the other than it buys back from that other, so that it may get a balance of cash in its favor. Necessarily if A has this balance B cannot have it. If B has it A cannot. So each tries to make it harder for the other to sell his goods by putting up a tariff wall as high as possible; thus narrowing the market for the produce of the natural industries of both A and B, and making the cost of living higher for both peoples. Making enemies instead of making friends.

To induce our people to believe that high tariff is a blessing instead of a curse the bait of the "full dinner-pail" has been hung out by self-seeking monopolists. Even were this bait not delusive the full dinner-pail for 10% of our wage-earners would mean one less full for 90%; for only 10% are engaged in occupations supposedly benefited by the tariff. Moreover it is worthy of note that that 10% is the worst paid of all classes of wage-earners.

If tariffs are really beneficial why not have more?

After the War of Independence the thirteen states of America tried the plan, indulging themselves in an internecine tariff war. As a consequence, at one time a bloody war between Vermont, New Hampshire, and New York seemed inevitable. Rhode Island incurred similar danger. But soon thereafter the fathers of the American Republic took from the newly established states this vicious power to levy these idiotic intercolonial tariffs.

Look at this same business from a humorous point of view, the view of an American hat buyer visiting Paris for the 51st time, simply to learn the coming styles. Dorothy Canfield Fisher tells the story in the "Outlook" of August 28th. After showing how coming events compel Dame Fashion by an inscrutable foresight, our hat-buyer moralises thus:—

"If we humans are to get on at all, get any further away from having tails and living in trees, we've got to knock down the partitions and make one big room of the world—the same way each nation is one big room, with the blacksmith trading his horseshoes for clothes and not trying to be a tailor himself.

"Take farmers"—time was—"when old farmers in Connecticut raised nearly every single thing they used all the year around and were proud of being such idiots. Nowadays the Connecticut farmer doesn't waste his time trying to grow corn in a climate where you're liable to get frosts in early September; he leaves the farmer in Iowa to do that, and he raises the best apples in the world, and with the money he makes that way he buys him oranges that a Florida farmer has raised. It's my opinion that we've got to come to that on a big, big

scale. And if we do come to it there won't be any more wars"

"Now, I don't know anything about anything but hats, and so I don't try to have opinions about the League of Nations, nor how the trick is going to be turned by the statesmen—if there are any such; but if it is going to be turned, it's going to take everybody's shoulder to the wheel, you can be sure.

"Now one of the things that France can produce better than other people is hats." Of course all know of many things we can produce better than France, and the obvious course is to make interchange of products as easy as possible with the French and all other nations. So commerce and civilization would flourish, and mankind co-operate to render mutual service, rendering war needless.

Besides, think of our new transportation methods in this connection. Recall Tennyson's line

. . . . "Argosies of magic sails
Pilots of the purple twilight dropping down
with costly bales."

Picture how silly a frontier custom house will appear with airships passing in the night three or four miles overhead; the cost of any efficient air-patrol would over-balance the heaviest scale of tariff ever named.

Indubitably the peace of the world depends on economic justice and real equality of opportunity for all. "Free trade," as M. Henri Lambert tells us in his admirable work "Pax Economica," "seems the only possible peace-maker." Would that every one could read his book!

As to racial difficulties, with which one may class political, how largely artificial these are may be gathered by recent experiences. Less than a century ago France and Britain were supposed irreconcilable hereditary foes. In 1853 France became the ally of her ancient enemy and joined with Turkey to resist the Russian crusade to drive the Turks from Europe. Then Germany was Britain's fast friend; her Crown Prince married England's Princess Royal. Today we have seen Russia allied with France and Britain against Germany and Turkey. Obviously then these alleged national hatreds are artificial and evanescent.

At home in San Francisco our own experience amply proves the possibility of all races living together in harmony under one government.

In this matter, as in economics, our false early teachings are responsible for much mischief. Every nation instills into its plastic youth the dogma of its indubitable superiority to every other nation, and inculcates overweening pride therein. Such pride of birth is obviously utterly ridiculous when we remember that no living soul ever had opportunity to select even the color of its own skin. Are we ready to add real Fraternity to America's gifts to the world of Liberty and Equality?

To name Religion as a cause of war is, perchance, to disturb a hornet's nest. Some contend that Wars of Religion are now impossible. Sad to say, stubborn facts refute this. At least one nation is today on the verge of civil war because of jarring creeds. In spite of the warnings given 1900 years ago on the shores of Galilee, superstitious bigots still "compass sea and land to make one proselyte." And instead of the simple one-word creed then given that would unite all mankind, these ardent partisans still seek to impose on others their special definitions of the Infinite; definitions that hair-splitting Greek metaphysicians and Alexandrine casuists squabbled and wrangled over in the days when men believed the whole universe was just one little flat-plain earth, with a dish-cover sky, and peep-hole stars. Why in the name of common-sense should the 20th century continue the furious and frivolous wranglings of mad monks and hoary hermits of the second? But what was, and is, the uniting one-word creed of the Galilean? Listen!

"The hour is coming when men's Holy Church
Shall melt away in ever-widening walls, and
be for all mankind!
And in its place a mightier church shall come,
whose covenant word
Shall be the deeds of love. Not "Credo" then,
"Amo" shall be the password thro' its gates.

Man shall not ask his brother any more "Believest thou?"
But "Lovest thou?" Till all the world
Shall answer at God's altar, "Lord, I love!"
For Hope may anchor; Faith may steer; but Love,
Great Love alone is captain of the soul.

Far too long has a smug sacerdotalism, affecting knowledge of the impenetrable mysteries of the universe, and demanding child-like credulity and servile submission, divided mankind into a thousand hostile camps on endless whimsical pretexts. The most flagrant instance of this was the severance of the Latin and Greek churches because of the omission, or insertion, of the letter iota in a Greek word defining the nature of Deity; a matter of which neither party had, or has, the remotest knowledge.

Today the acceptance of the one-word creed of the lowly Nazarene must reunite and regenerate Humanity on that new foundation of Righteousness and Justice so boldly demanded by our noble President. He, as I told you, has written my lecture for me. These are his words:

"In this war the common will of mankind has been substituted for the particular purposes of individual states.

The issues of the war are these:

Shall the military power of any nation, or group of nations, be suffered to determine the fortunes of peoples over whom they have no right to rule except the right of force?

Shall strong nations be free to wrong weak nations and make them subject to their purpose and interest?

Shall peoples be ruled and dominated, even in their own internal affairs, by arbitrary and irresponsible force, or by their own will and choice?

Shall there be a **common standard of right and privilege** for all peoples and nations, or shall the strong do as they will and the weak suffer without redress?

Shall the assertion of right be haphazard and by casual alliance or shall there be a **common concert to oblige the observance of common rights?**

. . . . These issues must be settled. . . . definitely, once and for all, with a full and unequivocal acceptance of the principle that the interest of the weakest is as sacred as the interest of the strongest."

We cannot now come to terms with the enemy because they observe no covenants and accept no principle but force and their own interest.

All who sit at the peace table must "come ready to pay the price. "That price is impartial justice!"

"The indispensable instrumentality is a league of nations formed under covenants that will be efficacious."

"The constitution of that league of nations, and a clear definition of its objects, must be a part, is, in a sense, the most essential part of the peace settlement itself. It cannot be done now. If done now it would be merely a new alliance, confined to the nations associated against the common enemy. It is not likely that it could be formed after the settlement. It is necessary to guarantee the peace, and the peace can not be guaranteed as an after thought."

And these are the Peace Terms:

1. The impartial justice meted out must involve **no** discrimination between those to whom we wish to be just and those to whom we do **not** wish to be just. It must be a justice that plays no favorites and knows no standing but the equal rights of the several parties concerned.
2. No special or separate interest of any single nation, or any group of nations, can be made the basis of any part of the settlement, which is not consistent with the common interests of all.
3. There can be no leagues or alliances or special covenants and understandings within the general and common family of the league of nations.
4. And more specifically. there can be no special, selfish, **economic** combination within the league, and no employment of any form of economic boycott, or exclusion, except as the power of economic penalty by

exclusion from the markets of the world may be vested in the league of nations itself as a means of discipline and control.

5. All international agreements and treaties of every kind must be made known in their entirety to the rest of the world.

That this splendid program may be carried out "Every sign of these terrible days of war and revolutionary change . . . bids us search our hearts thro' and thro' and make them ready for the birth of a new day. . . . Old party slogans have lost their significance and will mean nothing to the voter of the future, for the war is certain to change the mind of Europe as well as the mind of America. . . .

"The men in the trenches will, it is likely, return home with a new view, and a new impatience of all mere political phrases, and will demand **real thinking and sincere action.**"

"Every program must be shot thro' and thro' with utter disinterestedness; that no party must try to serve itself, but **every party must try to serve humanity;** and the task is a very practical one, meaning that every program, every measure in ever program, must be tested by this question, and this question only: Is it just, is it for the benefit of the average man without influence or privilege; does it embody, in real fact, the highest conception of social justice and of right dealing, without respect of person, or class, or particular interest?"

Only on this basis of absolute Right and Justice for all, which our President therein nobly demands, can we hope to usher in the new day of triumphant world freedom, world brotherhood and world union,—that "Coming Commonwealth of Man" whose longed for advent so many nations joined in celebrating last Fourth of July.

"An age is dying, nay is dead!
A breath of change, of morning, stirs!
Ah! yonder, see the skies grow red!
And, lo! the sun's sweet harbingers,
Birds of new vision, and new thought
Are everywhere upon the wing!
Scant promise has the dawning brought,
What shall the coming daylight bring?

Oh! you! whose hearts are bold and free!
Oh! you! whose eyes with fire are lit!
A whisper thrills, "The day shall be
Whate'er you will to make of it.
'Tis yours to let the breaking light
'Gainst earth's dark mists still strive in vain;
Or bid, in undisputed right
The sun of Love and Peace to reign."

Oh! you! Whate'er your speech and creed,
Whose hearts to one clear law beat true,
The world, in its most bitter need,
Lifts dumb, unconscious prayers to you!
The Past is dying! Leave it dead!
Awake! And to one purpose drawn,
By one **uniting spirit** led
Press on, press on, towards the Dawn."

What dawn? The dawn when shall rise the Sun of Righteousness, with healing in his wings, and the coming commonwealth of man shall unite the world.

Let us joy in and work for this real fulfilment of real Christmas!

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